

The invention will be described in conjunction with the following drawings wherein:

Fig. 1 is a vertical sectional view of the device according to the invention;

Fig. 2 is a graph depicting the results of a first experiment using the device shown in Fig. 1;

Fig. 3 is a graph depicting the results of a second experiment using the device shown in Fig. 1.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED EMBODIMENT--;

line 25, change "A" to --As shown in Fig. 1, the--.

Page 7, line 2, Change "CLAIMS" to --WHAT IS CLAIMED IS--.

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claims 1-9 as follows:

1. (Amended) A method [Process] for suspending particles [(1)] of a solid in a predetermined volume [(2)] of liquid contained inside a container [(3)], the method comprising the following steps:

immersing the solid in the predetermined volume of liquid such that the particles of the solid are deposited on a flat bottom of the container as sediment[starting with a deposit (4) which is made up of the said particles sedimented on the bottom (3a) of the said container and is immersed in the said volume of liquid, characterized in that];

establishing a gas circuit [(5) is set up] in the container[, partly in direct] in partial contact with the predetermined volume of liquid [(2)], the gas circuit forming [in] a loop comprising at least two substantially parallel flows [(5a, 5b) which are] separated by a head loss [(6)] located level with the flat bottom [(3a)] of the container [(3).]; and

alternating a direction of a gas stream traveling [travelling] through the [said] container along the [said] gas circuit [(5) is alternated].

2. (Amended) The method [Process] according to Claim 1, wherein [characterized in that] the gas circuit does one of enter and exit [(5) enters or leaves] the container through two openings formed in the device [(7, 8)] for inlet or outlet of the two parallel flows [(5a, 5b)] respectively, the two openings being [~~formed in the said container (3)~~ and] isolated from one another, and the method comprises the additional step of alternating a pressure applied to the gas circuit between one of a positive pressure and [then] a negative pressure [is applied] alternately through at least one of the two openings [said opening (7, 8)].

3. (Amended) The method [Process] according to Claim 1, wherein [characterized in that] inert solid beads [(9)] are dispersed freely at the flat bottom [(3a)] of the container.

4. (Amended) The method [Process] according to Claim 1, wherein [characterized in that the] the head loss is [(6) represents] at least 10 mbar[, and is preferably between 10 mbar and 500 mbar, and for example between 50 mbar and 200 mbar].

6. (Amended) The method [Process] according to Claim 1, wherein [characterized in that] the gas stream is alternated at a frequency at least equal to 3 Hz[, and preferably between 4 and 25 Hz, for example between 5 and 10 Hz].

8. (Amended) A device [Device comprising a container (3)] for holding a predetermined volume of liquid and [particles (1) of a solid, which is] designed for suspending [the said] particles in the liquid, the device comprising:

a container providing a tapered neck and a flat bottom, the container holding a predetermined volume of the liquid [starting with a deposit (4) which is made up of the said particles sedimented on the bottom (3a) of the said container and is immersed in the said volume of liquid, characterized in that it comprises];

at least one conduit [(10) which is arranged] disposed in the [said] container, the conduit having a first end extending out of the tapered neck and a second end terminating at the flat bottom, the conduit [(3) and] defines [in the latter] two chambers [(11, 12) which

communicate] communicating with [one another] each other through a first passage [(6)]
formed level with the flat bottom [(3a)] of the [said] container [(3),] and with the atmosphere
outside of the container [respectively] by at least two openings [(7, 8) at least,]; and

[a] means of alternate pressurization for alternating a pressure in a gas circuit flowing
through the device using the two chambers, the pressure alternating between one of a positive
pressure and a negative pressure, the alternate pressurization means communicating [which
communicates] with at least one of the two openings [said opening (7, 8) and is designed to
set up a positive pressure then a negative pressure successively in the gas circuit (5)

comprising the two chambers (11, 12) which communicate with one another]

9/1/ (Twice Amended) The device [Device] according to Claim 8, wherein
[characterized in that] the conduit [(10)] is [in the form of] a tube and the first passage formed
level with the flat bottom is at least one gap [which enters the container (3) as far as a lower
level, forming at least one gap (6) with] between the flat bottom [(3a)] of the [said] container
and the second end.

10/8. (Twice Amended) The device [Device] according to Claim 8, wherein
[characterized in that the container (3) has a] a first opening between the neck [(3b) in which]
and the [upper] first end of the conduit [(10) is arranged, with a functional gap defining an]
defines one of the two openings communicating with one of [opening (7) to one (11) of] the
two chambers.

11/9. (Amended) The device [Device] according to Claim 8, further comprising
[characterized in that the upper end of the conduit is closed off by] a stopper partially closing
the first end of the conduit, the stopper [(13) in which] having a second passage [(13a)]
defining [an opening (8) to] the other of the two openings in communication with [(12) of]
the other of the two chambers [is formed].

Please add claims 10-12 as follows: